DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 312 506 CE 053 688

AUTHOR Davis, Steven; Chown, Bill
TITLE Recidivism among Offenders Incarcerated by the Oklahoma Department of Corrections Who Received Vocational-Technical Training: A Survival Data Analysis of Offenders Released January 1982 through July 1986.
INSTITUTION Oklahoma State Dept. of Corrections, Oklahoma City.
PUB DATE Nov 86
NOTE 6p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Correctional Education; Correctional Rehabilitation; Job Training; *Outcomes of Education; Postsecondary Education; *Prisoners; Program Effectiveness; *Recidivism; *Technical Education; *Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS *Oklahoma

ABSTRACT

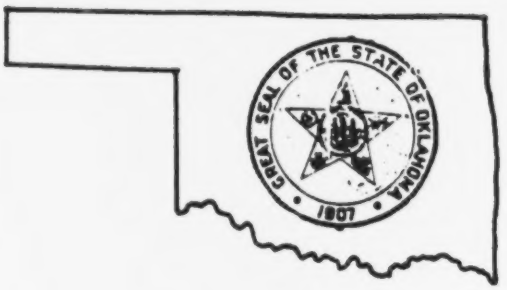
Using data excerpted from a larger 1985 study, researchers reviewed records of a group of inmates of Oklahoma Department of Corrections institutions who received vocational-technical training between January 1982 and July 1986, to check for recidivism (reincarceration). The study examined the recidivism trends among inmates released after completion of vocational-technical training, compared to inmates who did not receive such training. The vocational-technical group consisted of all participants who had completed a training program and who were released between January 1, 1982 and July 31, 1986 (2,372 inmates). The comparison group, released during the same period, consisted of 9,851 released inmates. The study found that of the vo-tech group released during the study period, 26 percent were reincarcerated, compared to 22 percent of the comparison group. The study concluded that further research is needed to determine why the recidivism rate is higher for the vo-tech group and to determine what other factors, such as age, classification, need areas, and criminal history, might account for the higher recidivism of the treated group. (KC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED312506

CE

PLANNING AND RESEARCH



Recidivism Among Offenders Incarcerated by the Oklahoma Department of Corrections Who Received Vocational-Technical Training: A Survival Data Analysis of Offenders Released January 1982 Through July 1986

Dr. Steven Davis
Planning and Research

Bill Chown
Planning and Research

November 1986

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CE053688

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Recidivism Among Offenders Incarcerated by the Oklahoma Department of Corrections Who Received Vocational-Technical Training: A Survival Data Analysis of Offenders Released January 1982 Through July 1986

Introduction

An issue of continuing concern to the Department of Corrections is recidivism among those released from the department's custody. That is, how often, or at what rate, are offenders re-incarcerated after having been released from prison. More importantly, are there differences in recidivism rates among different groups of offenders? A report released by the department in 1985 (Davis, 1985), which reviewed a randomly selected sample of offenders released in 1982, made comparisons based on race, sex, offense category and type of release. Few differences were found among these groups. Non-violent offenders released to community supervision were found to be the least successful group at the end of the three-year follow-up period. On the other hand, violent offenders released on parole were the most successful. In general, the recidivism rate was higher among non-violent offenders compared to violent offenders, and higher for those released to the community supervision portion of a split sentence when compared to paroles and discharges.

This report is extracted from a larger study which also reviewed recidivism among inmates who had been judged intellectually impaired, who had been given emergency releases because of overcrowding, and youthful offenders who had participated in the Regimented Inmate Discipline program. The focus of this excerpt is a group of inmates who received vocational-technical training between January 1982 and July 1986 while incarcerated by the Oklahoma Department of Corrections.

Method

This analysis used offender data from the Department of Corrections computerized inmate/client master files and from specialized computer files of vo-tech participation data. An offender is counted only once within the analysis period. The time period of interest for each offender is the number of "months out," the number of 30 day periods from the date of the offender's first release within the timeframe until the first subsequent reception, or until the end of the study period if the offender did not return to the Department of Corrections. Thus, in this study, recidivism is defined as a re-incarceration within the Oklahoma Department of Corrections.

The data analysis was based on the "life-table method" of "survival analysis" as described by Lee (1980). Survival analysis allows for the estimation of a "survival function" over time, which can be used to make comparisons among various groups. The results of the survival analysis in the present study are displayed graphically to facilitate comparisons between groups. The method used in this study compensates for the fact that offenders within each group may be "at risk" of recidivism for varying lengths of time, depending on the date of their release. A summary of the numeric results, which are the basis of the graphs, is also included for review.

Results

The Oklahoma Department of Corrections provides inmates the opportunity to acquire vocational skills needed to obtain and retain employment upon release to the community. The vocational program consists of training in auto body repair, auto mechanics, machine tool, air conditioning and refrigeration, building trades, farm machinery repair, heavy equipment operation, diesel mechanics, welding, masonry, carpentry, parts clerk, plumbing and small engine repair. The training is provided by the State Department of Vocational Technical Education and the Vocational Rehabilitation Division of the Department of Human Services, in cooperation with the Educational Services Unit of the Department of Corrections. Data for inmate enrollees in vo-tech programs since 1980 have been compiled in a computerized data base. The present study examined the recidivism trends among inmates released after completion of vo-tech training, compared to inmates who did not receive vo-tech training.

The vo-tech group consisted of all vo-tech participants who had completed a training program, and who were released between January 1, 1982 and July 31, 1986. This sample included 2,372 released inmates. The comparison group included all released inmates who had not completed a vo-tech training program prior to their release, during this same time period of January 1, 1982 to July 31, 1986. The comparison group included 9,851 released inmates.

The "survival curves" for these two groups are shown in the attached graph. The results were unexpected, in that the vo-tech group returned to the Department of Corrections at a faster rate than the comparison group. The "survival curve" projects that at the end of 4 1/2 years (54 months), 65% of the comparison group will remain successful, while 62% of the vo-tech group will not have returned to the Oklahoma Department of Corrections. Points of interest concerning these two groups include the following:

- -Of all vo-tech graduates released during the study period, 26% have been re-incarcerated. In the comparison group, 22% have returned to the Department of Corrections.

- -Of the vo-tech graduates released during 1982, 39% have at least one subsequent incarceration in the Oklahoma Department of Corrections.

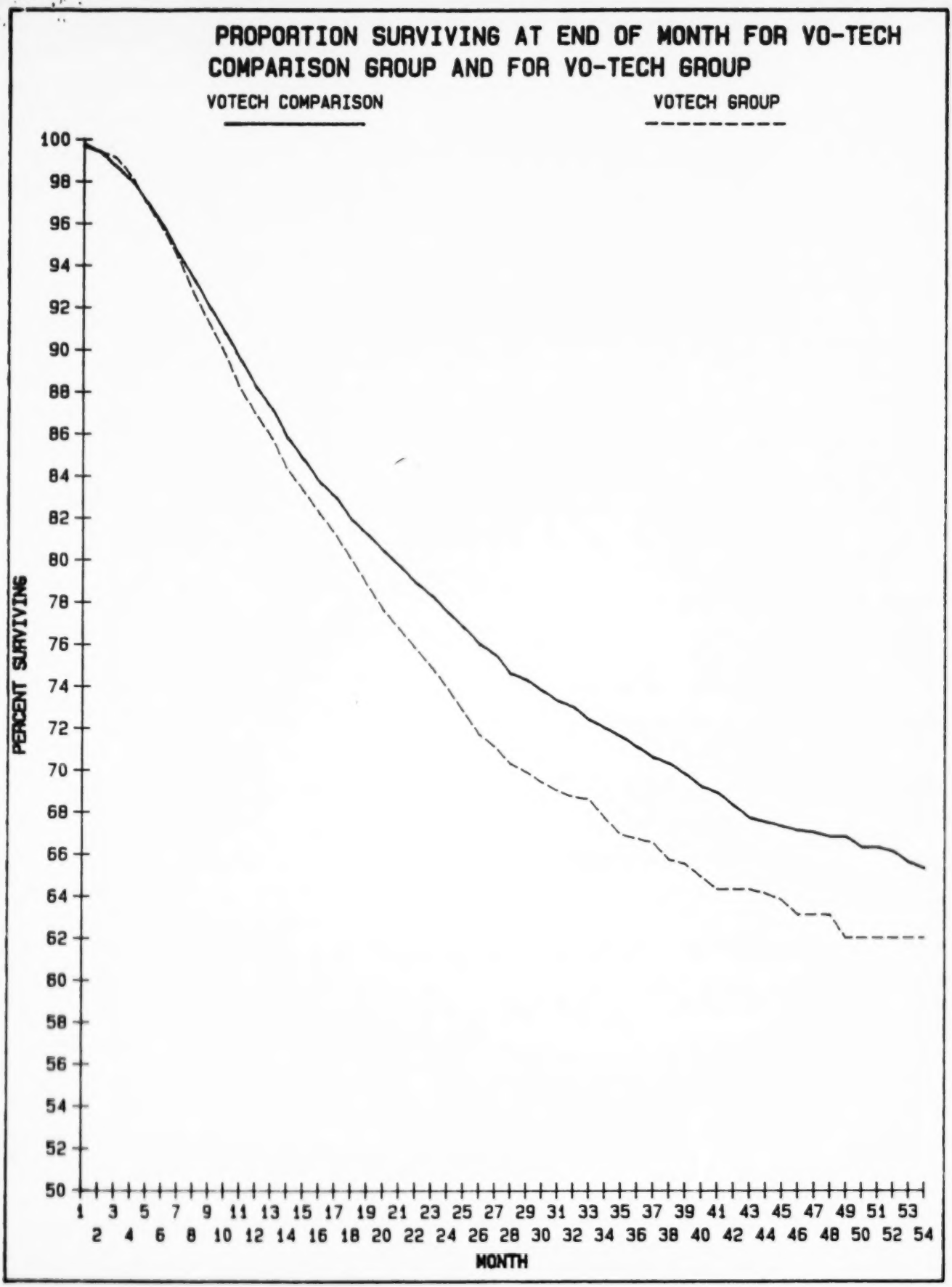
- -The peak period of recidivism for both groups was between the seventh to fourteenth months after release.

Discussion

As mentioned earlier, these results were counterintuitive since the inmates who had received vocational training, and were thus thought to be prepared for release with new job skills, returned at a faster rate than the comparison group. On the other hand, those without job skills may be more likely to have deficits in other areas as well. In that case, those chosen to take vo-tech may be at higher risk to fail after release in spite of the training they receive. Further study needs to be undertaken to determine whether there are other characteristics, such as offender age, classification need areas or criminal history, which would account for the higher recidivism rate among the vo-tech group.

Oklahoma Department of Corrections
Projected Cumulative Proportion Surviving After Release from Prison Among Vo-Tech Participants and Comparison Group 1982 - 1986

Months After Release	Vo-Tech Group N=2,372	Comparison Group N=9,851
1	99.8%	99.7%
12	86.9%	88.2%
24	73.9%	77.5%
36	66.7%	71.1%
48	63.1%	66.8%
54	62.0%	65.3%


PROPORTION SURVIVING AT END OF MONTH FOR VO-TECH COMPARISON GROUP AND FOR VO-TECH GROUP
VOTECH COMPARISON
VOTECH GROUP
PERCENT SURVIVING
100
98
96
94
92
90
88
86
84
82
80
78
76
74
72
70
68
66
64
62
60
58
56
54
52
50
1 3 5 7 9 11 13 15 17 19 21 23 25 27 29 31 33 35 37 39 41 43 45 47 49 51 53
2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 46 48 50 52 54
MONTH